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INFO RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 1795
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 2261

S E C R E T VIENNA 000825

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DNG: CO 07/07/2019
TAGS: PARM PREL ETTC CBW AU
SUBJECT: GOA INPUT ON AUSTRALIA GROUP AGENDA, RUSSIAN
PARTICIPATION BID

REF: STATE 067207

Classified By: Economic-Political Counselor Dean Yap. Reasons: 1.4 (b)
& (d).

¶1. (U) Economic Unit Chief delivered reftel demarche and Austria-only points to Dr. Helmut Krehlik, Head of the Austrian Economic Ministry's Export Control Division, who will lead Austria's delegation to the Australia Group (AG) 2009 plenary session in Paris. Krehlik welcomed USG coordination on the agenda.

¶2. (S) Dr. Krehlik will "consider seriously" doing a presentation on Iran at the plenary session. Austria has recent experience, including the conviction last year of Salzburg-based "Interchemie" for selling chemical precursors to an Iranian entity (the convicted unfortunately resulted only in a light sentence, Krehlik noted).

¶3. (S) In terms of a presentation on Russia, Krehlik suggested asking Germany's BAFA to take the lead. Since BAFA led a 3-year EU-funded project to study and assist Russia's export control bureaucracy, Germans are now among the West's most knowledgeable experts on Russian export control.

Uneasy At Prospect of Russian Participation

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¶4. (S) Speaking "privately and unofficially" on the topic of Russian participation, Krehlik expressed misgivings. Personally, Krehlik feels that the Australia Group has been an effective and collegial forum in part because Russia does NOT participate. Recent Russian grandstanding at a Wassenaar meeting highlighted how narrow GOR interests (e.g. the Russian effort to get license fees from Soviet-era munitions factories in Eastern Europe) sometimes trump their shared interest in non-proliferation. The Russians can effectively implement export controls "when they want to implement them" -- but bringing it into the Australia Group would not necessarily advance export control in Russia, and might be a hindrance elsewhere.

¶5. (S/NF) COMMENT: please PROTECT Krehlik on this point, since Austria's long-standing foreign policy is neutrality on the East-West divide and support for greater Russian integration with the West. END COMMENT.

Praise for EXBS Istanbul Conference

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¶6. (U) Krehlik had effusive praise for the USG/Turkish EXBS Export Control Conference in Istanbul last month, calling it "one of the best organized events" he's ever attended.
HOH